

Application No.: 10/564677

Case No.: 58913US004

REMARKS

Claims 31-42 and 51-54 are pending. Claims 43-50 have been withdrawn from consideration and are currently canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 31, 41, 42, 51 and 52 are currently amended. Claims 53 and 54 have been added. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

§ 112 Rejections

Claims 31-42 and 51-52 were rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. In particular, the Office Action states that each of the phrase "region of interest" in claim 31 and the term "intermingle" in claim 42 is vague and indefinite.

In claims 31, 51 and 52, the phrase "a wavelength region of interest" has been amended to only "a wavelength region".

Regarding the term "intermingle", Applicants respectfully disagree with the position taken in the Office Action. The subject patent application clearly discloses what is meant by this term. In particular, for example, see Fig. 4, and page 16, lines 7-10. Therefore, claim 42 has not been amended.

In summary, Applicants submit that the rejection of claims 31-42 and 51-52 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, has been overcome, and that the rejection should be withdrawn.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 31-35, 37-42, 51 and 52 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu et al. (WO 01/096104) in view of Stefanik (US 4,046,951). Claim 36 was also rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu et al. (WO 01/096104) in view of Stefanik (US 4,046,951) as applied to claim 33 above, and further in view of Gourio (US 6,334,382).

It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action mischaracterizes the teachings of Stefanik in order to support these rejections. In particular, the Office Action states that "Stefanik discloses a method of fusing together the layers of a polymeric multilayer article" (Emphasis Added).

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Stefanik discloses adhesively bonding an edge sealing system (e.g., the barrier layer 18 in Fig. 1) to the peripheral edge of a multilayer polymeric article. In particular, for example, see Column 3, lines 39-45 of Stefanik, which states:

The thin barrier layer, preferably 2 to 5 mils (0.05 to 0.13 millimeter) thick, is bonded to the edge of the interlayer 16 completely around the perimeter thereof. The barrier layer 18 preferably has its surface treated with a solution of an alkali metal addition component, preferably a sodium addition component, to improve its adhesion. (Emphasis Added)

Stefanik does not disclose any process for applying his "edge seal system" to the peripheral edge of a multilayer polymeric article that causes the polymeric material of the layers to liquefy, melt or otherwise fuse together.

In contrast, the present application expressly teaches various ways of "fusing" the multiple layers together along their peripheral edges (see, e.g., page 3, lines 9-21), including "by applying heat, radiation, and/or by causing a chemical reaction between the layers" (emphasis added).

Therefore, when the true teachings of the various references are combined as indicated in the Office Action, the present claimed invention will not result, because Stefanik does not teach to causing any kind of "fusing" to take place between the layers of his multiple layer polymeric article. Claim 1 has been further amended to make this distinction clear by reciting that the multiple layers of the optical film are fused together therebetween. As a result, it is submitted that the above § 103 rejections have been overcome and should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

Examination and reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

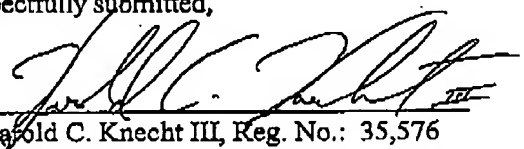
Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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